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None

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INT CL<sup>5</sup> A47B 43/00

(54) Bar or counter

(57) A folding work-surface and shelving apparatus or kit therefor (suitable for use as a portable drinks bar or vending counter) comprises a front panel 16, two side panels 12, 14, a work-surface 10, an open back, a partition panel 20 and at least one shelf 22, 24 designed to allow compact folding and stowage into a conveniently transported and easily stored unit.

Side panel 12 and front panel 16 fold in such a way that work surface 10 may be stowed between panels 12, 16 when folded; and likewise side panel 14, front panel 16 and partition panel 20 when folded form a stowage space for shelves 22, 24.

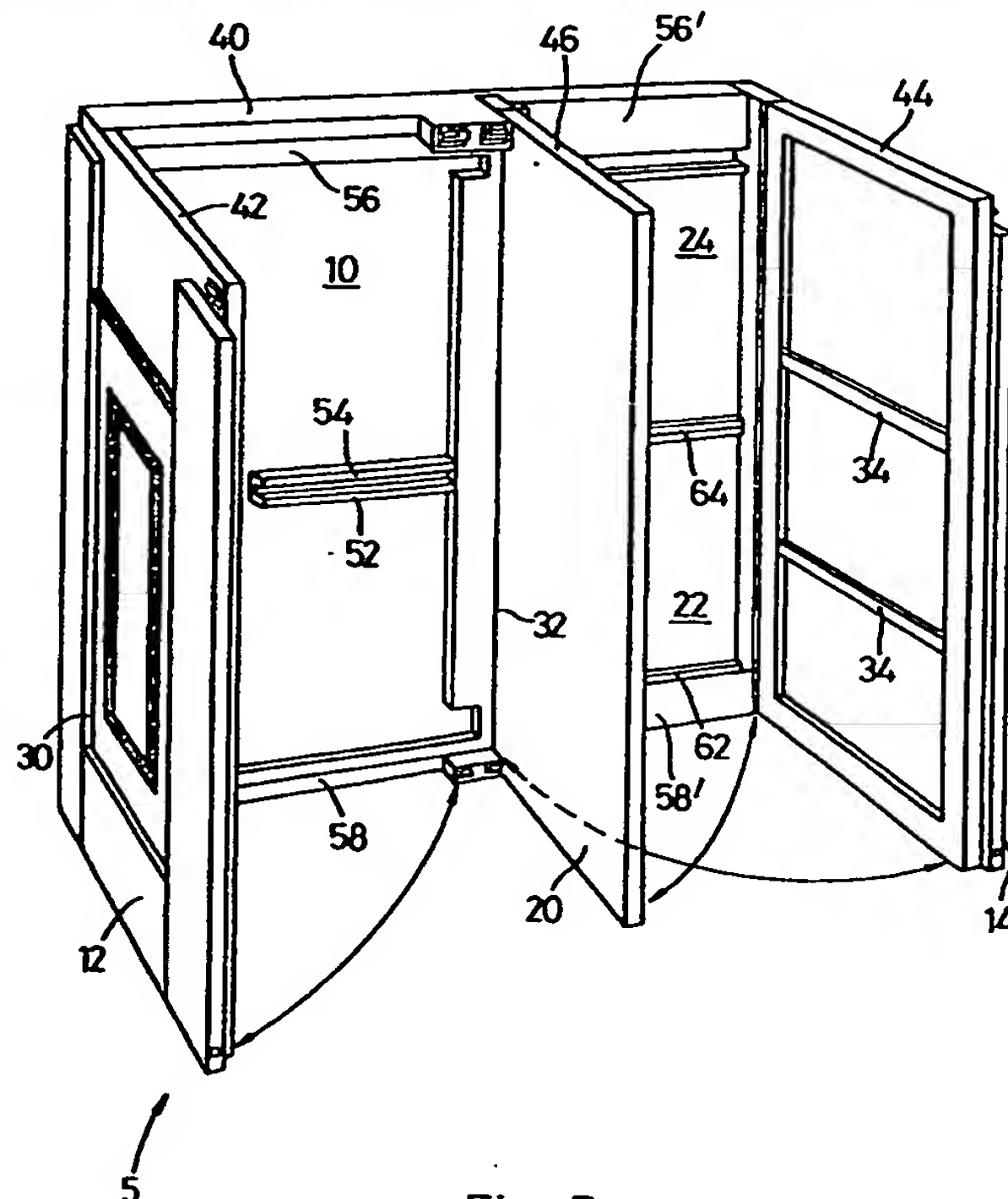
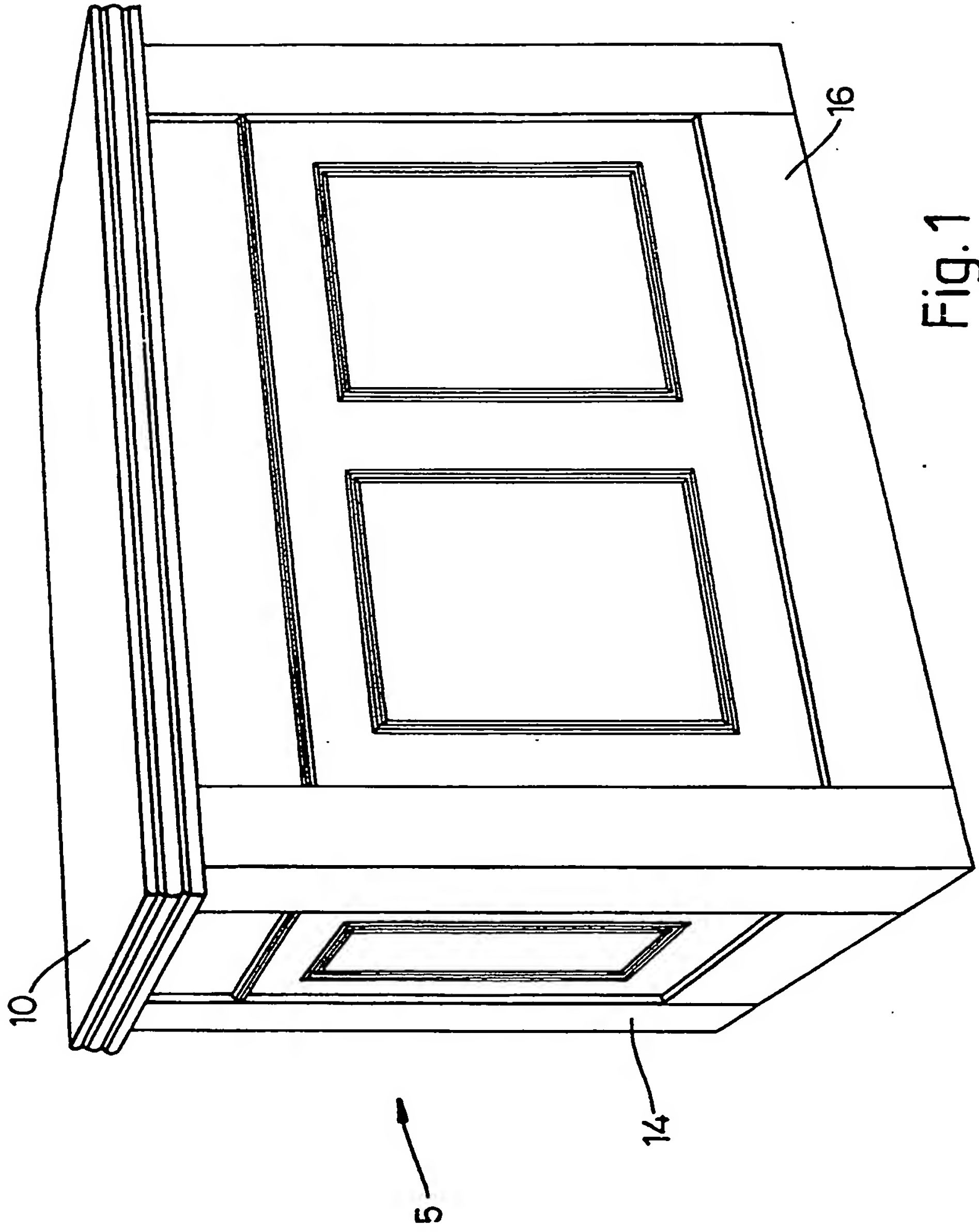


Fig. 5

At least one drawing originally filed was informal and the print reproduced here is taken from a later filed formal copy.

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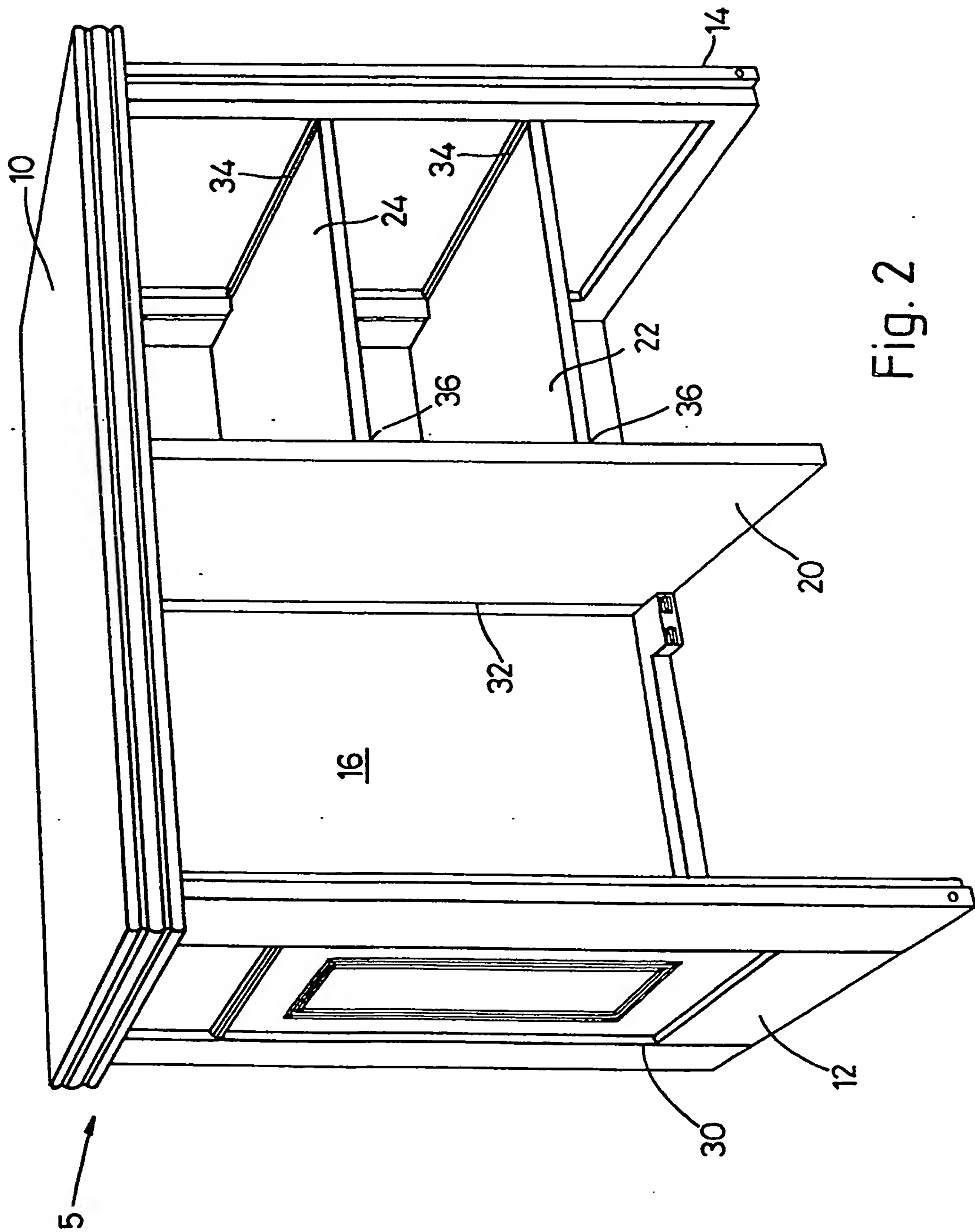
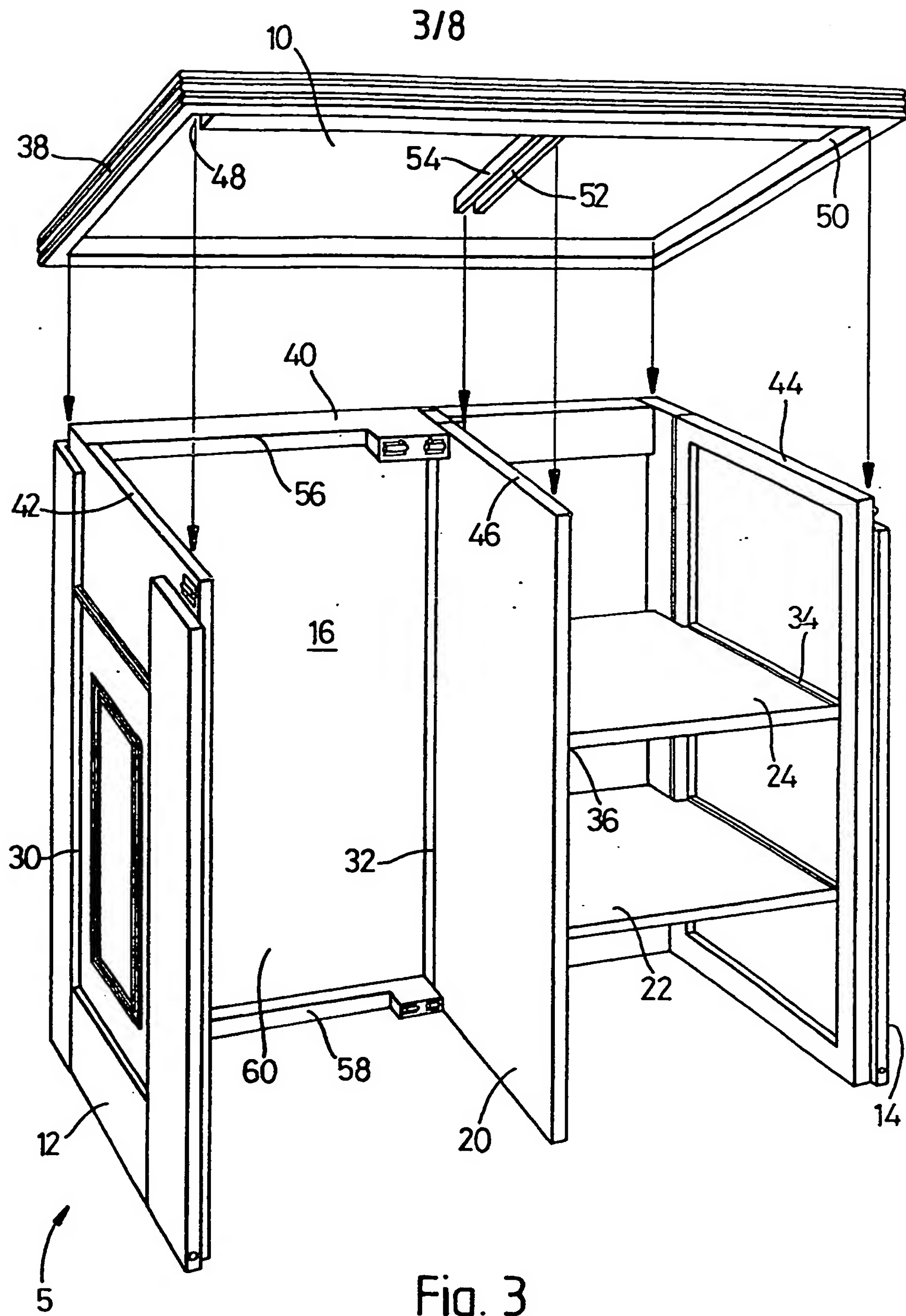
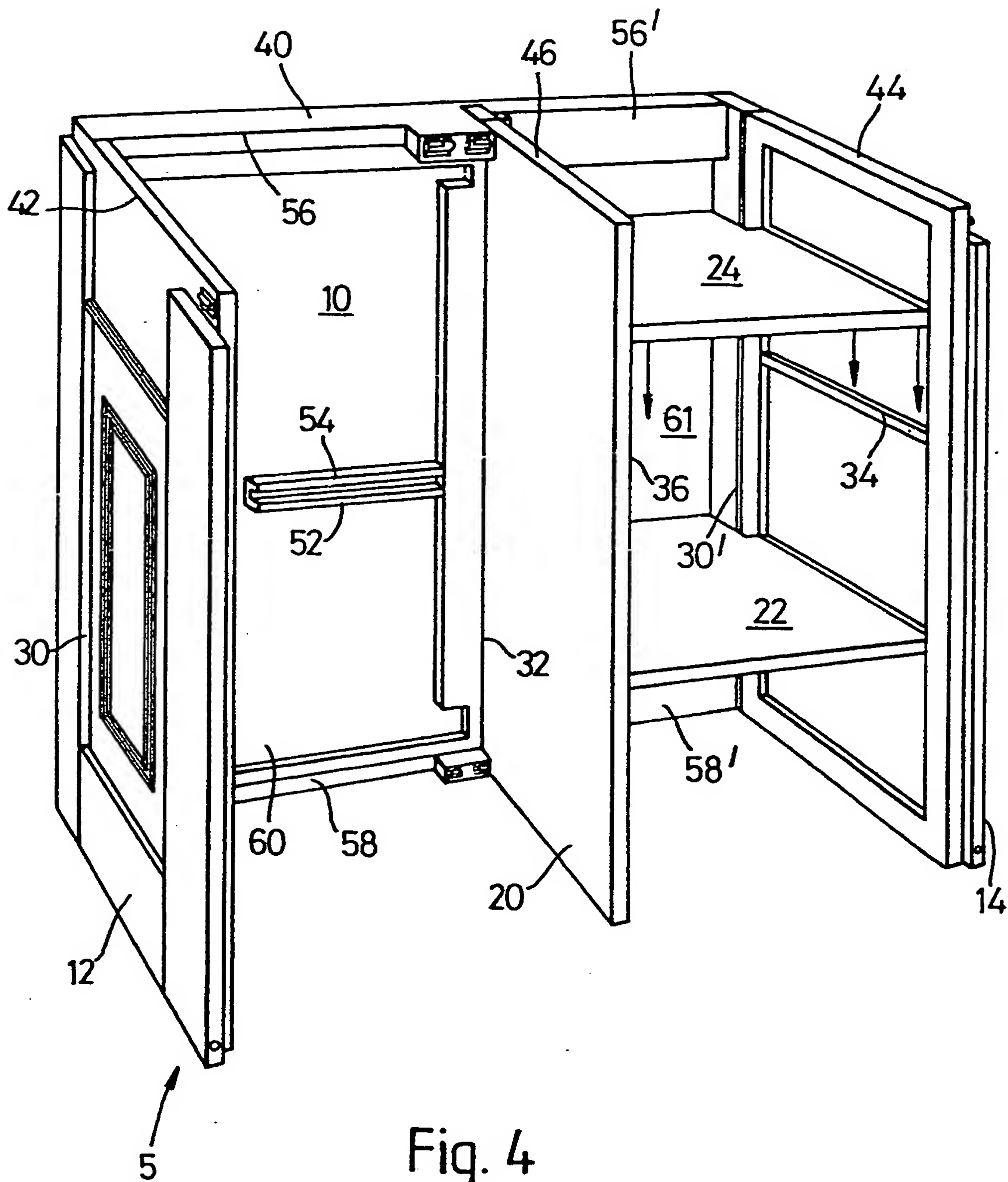


Fig. 2



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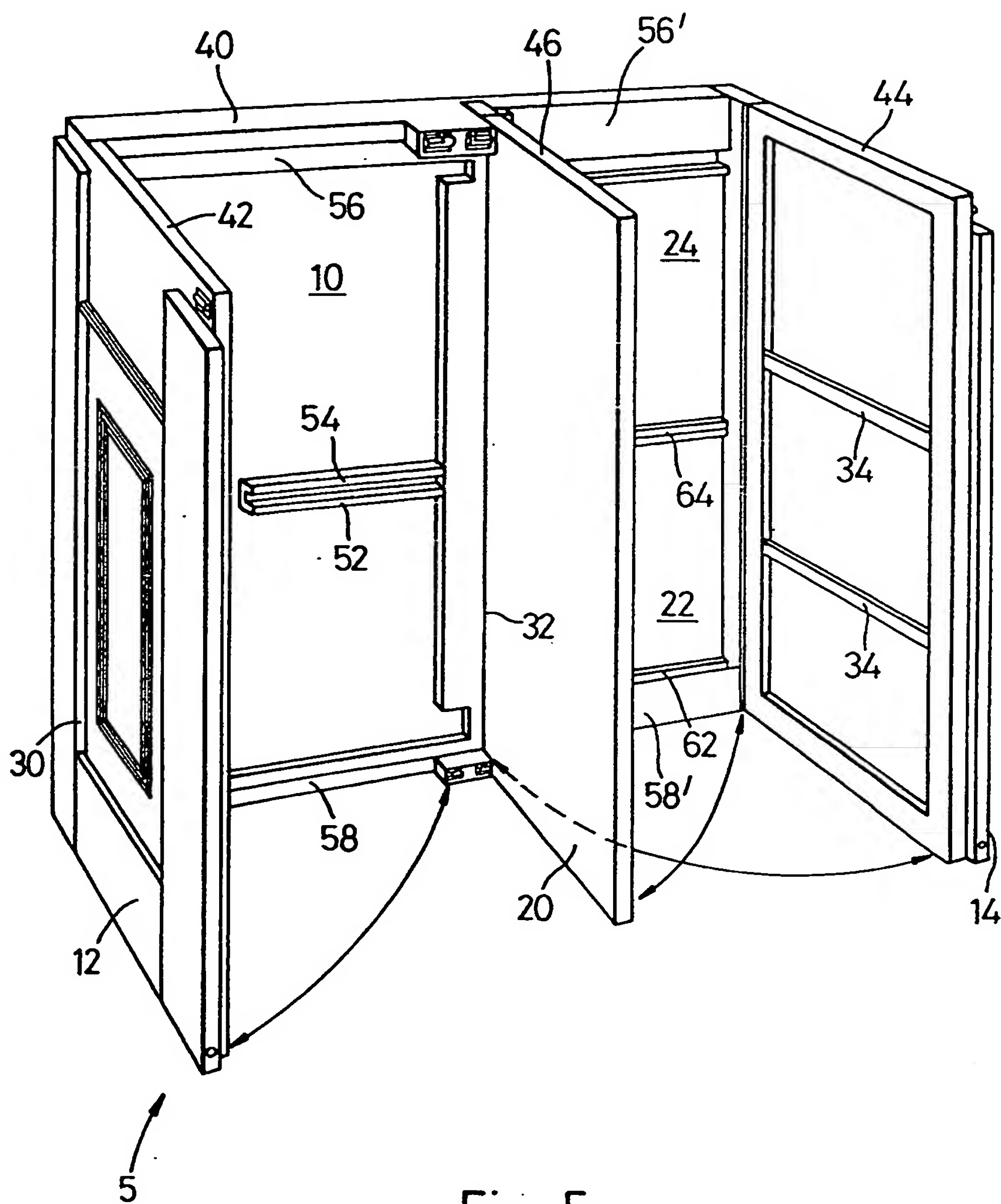


Fig. 5

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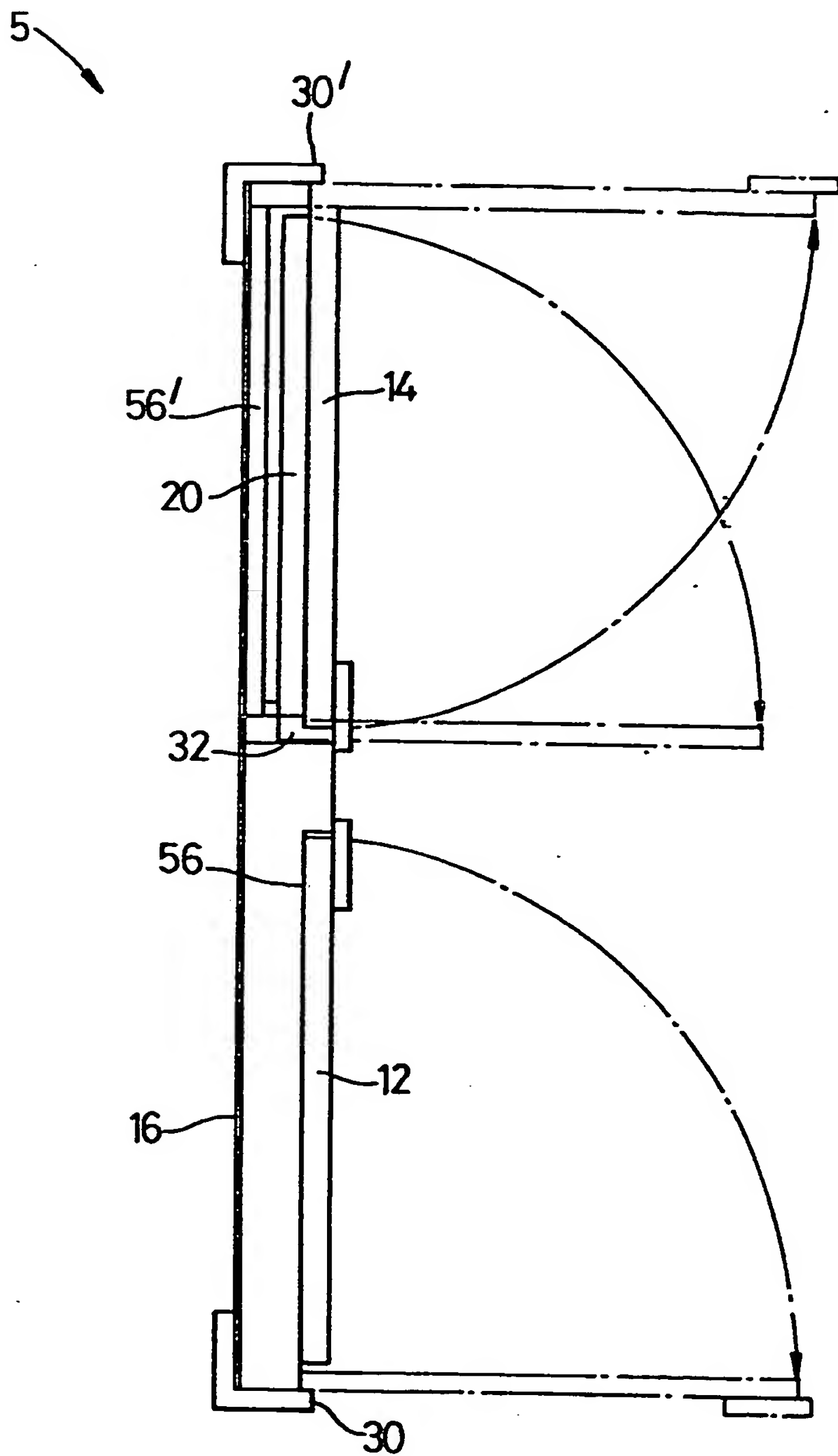


Fig. 6

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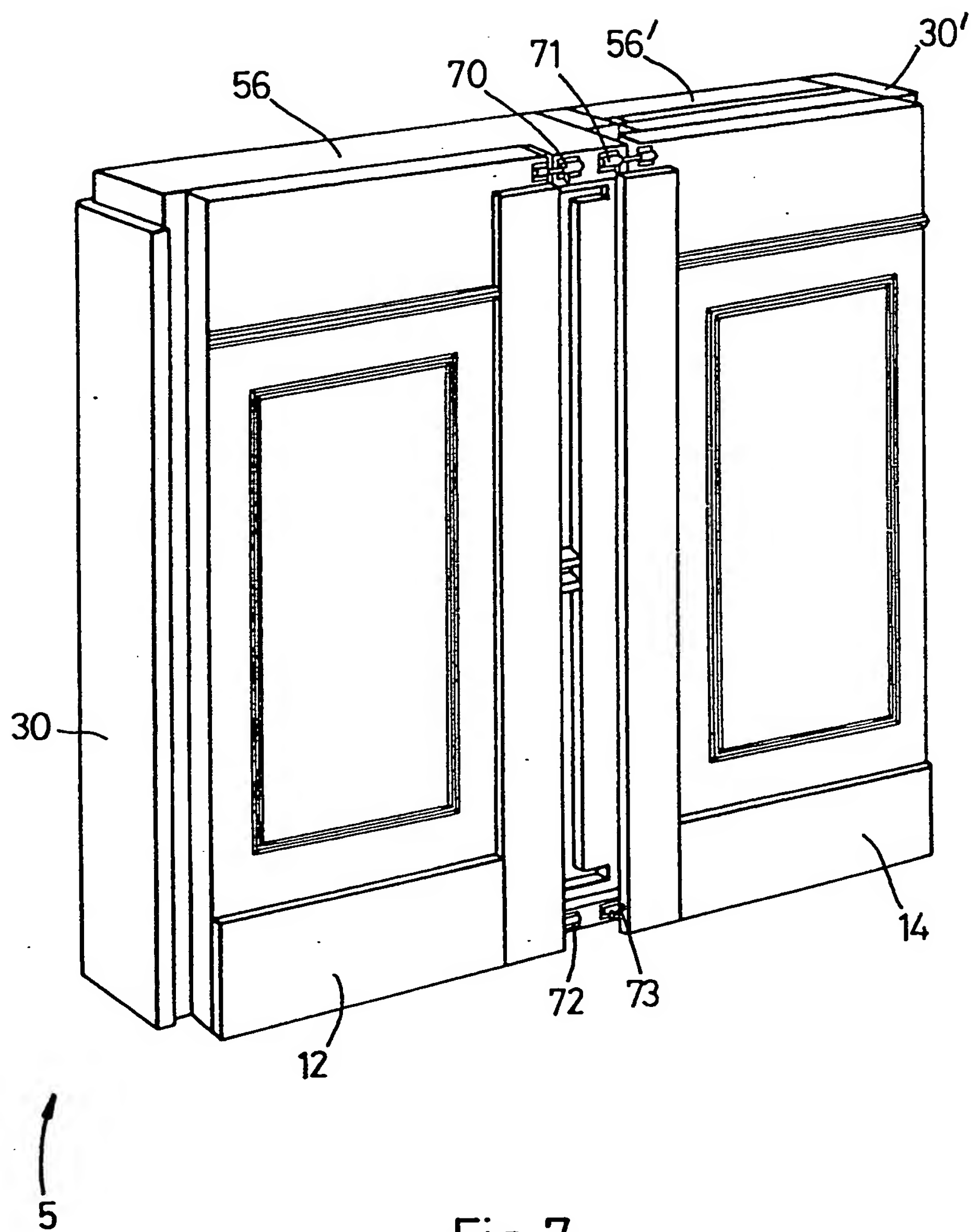


Fig. 7



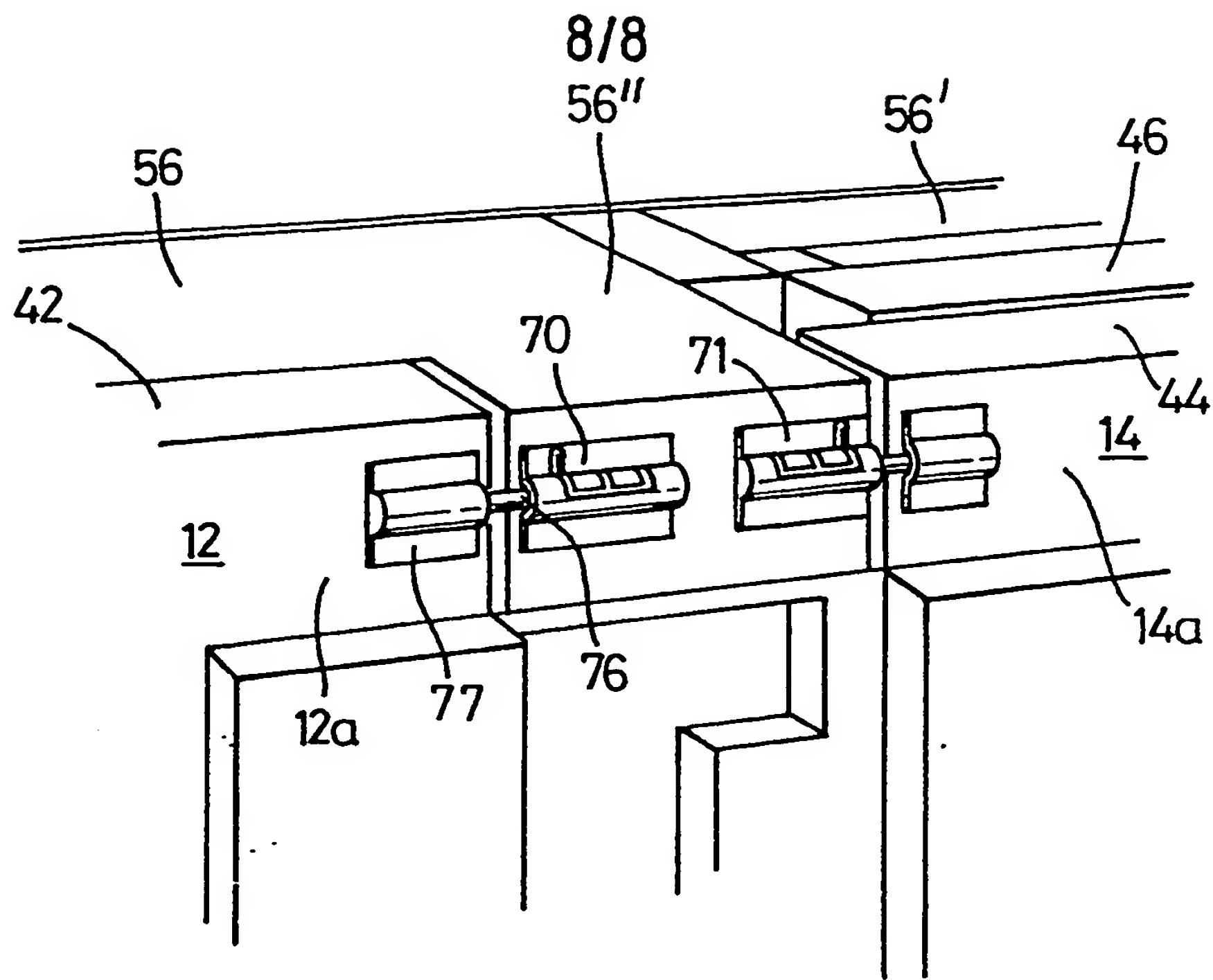


Fig. 8(a)

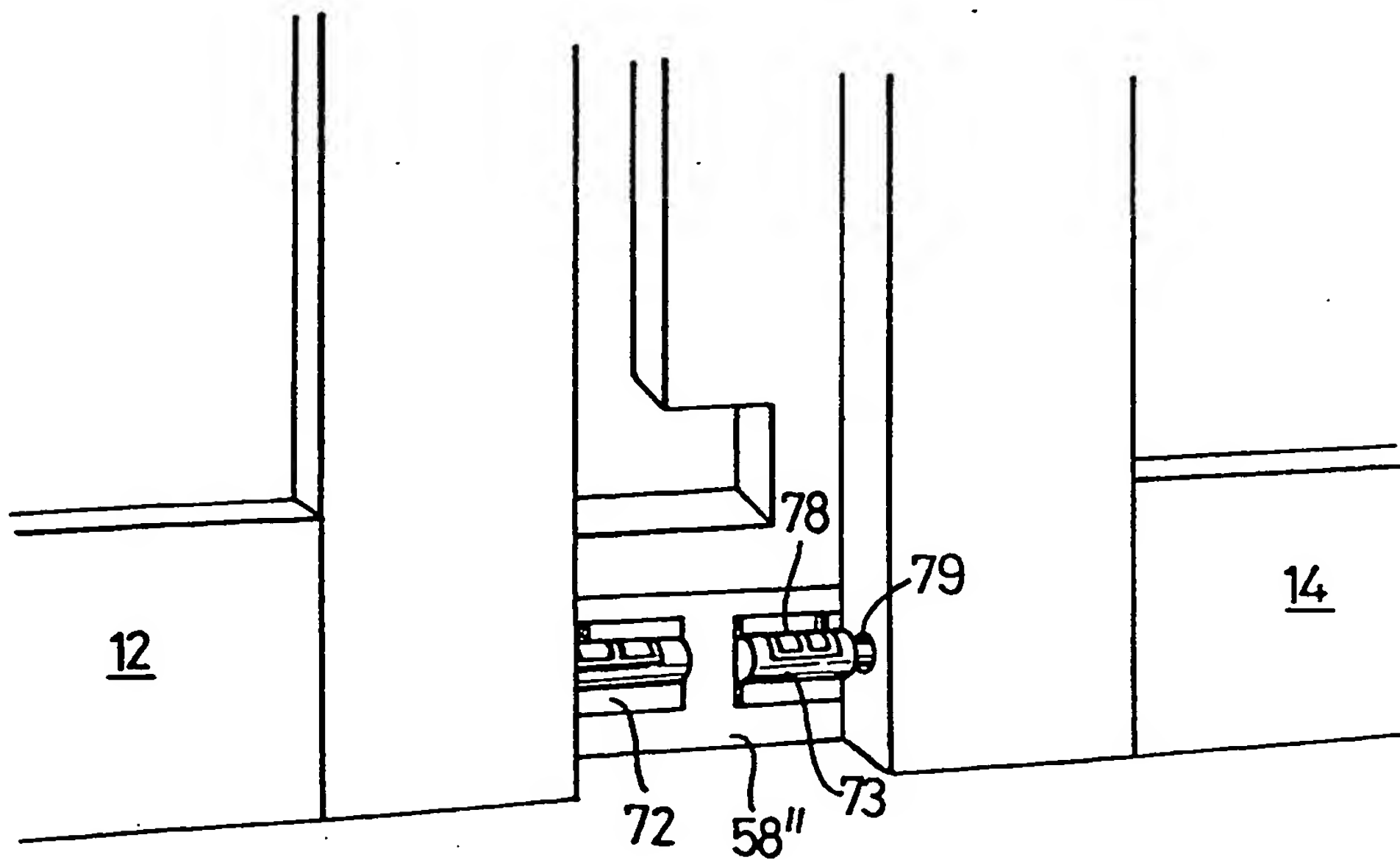


Fig. 8(b)

FOLDING WORK-SURFACE AND SHELVING APPARATUS

The present invention relates to portable work-  
5 surfaces and shelving apparatus, and in particular to those  
suitable for use as, for example, a drinks bar or vending  
counter.

It is common when organizing a social event, or  
10 similar activity, to require the temporary use of a vending  
counter or bar for known purposes, in a location not  
provided with such facilities. Use of ordinary tables or  
similar articles may not be adequate for a number of  
reasons, including the facilities they fail to provide.  
15 Transportation of purpose-built bar facilities may be  
inconvenient by virtue of their size and shape.

It is therefore an object of the present invention to  
provide easily transportable apparatus suitable for use as  
20 a bar or vending counter.

It is a further object of the present invention to  
provide as an integral part of said apparatus, convenient  
facilities beneath and behind said apparatus for the  
25 storage of, for example, such items as bottles and beer  
barrels and the like.

It is a further object of the present invention to

enable said apparatus to be folded into a compact, self-contained unit for easy transportation.

According to one presently preferred embodiment, the present invention provides a folding work-surface and shelving apparatus or kit therefor comprising:

a front panel, a first and second side panel, a work-surface, a partition panel and at least one shelf;

said front panel having said first and said second side panels and said partition panel foldably attached thereto; said first side panel and a portion of said front panel adapted to at least partially form a first cavity therebetween when said first side panel is in a folded position; said second side panel, said partition panel and a portion of said front panel adapted to at least partially form a second cavity therebetween when said second side panel and said partition panel are in a folded position; said first cavity being of suitable dimension for stowage of said work-surface and said second cavity being of suitable dimension for stowage of said at least one shelf; said first and second side panels and said front panel adapted to support said work-surface in a substantially horizontal position when said first and second side panels are in an unfolded position.

25

The present invention will now be described by way of example, and with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 shows a front perspective view of a fully assembled unfolded apparatus according to the present invention;

5        Figure 2 shows a rear perspective view of the fully assembled unfolded apparatus of figure 1;

Figure 3 shows a rear perspective view of the apparatus of figure 2 with detail of the underside of the  
10 work-surface shown;

Figure 4 shows a rear perspective view of the apparatus of figure 3 with side panels and a partition panel in unfolded position, shelves partly installed, and  
15 work-surface stowed;

Figure 5 shows a rear perspective view of the apparatus of figure 4 with side panels and a partition panel in unfolded position, shelving and work-surface  
20 stowed;

Figure 6 shows the apparatus of figure 5 in plan view, with side panels and partition panels in folded positions;

25        Figure 7 shows a rear perspective view of the apparatus of figure 1 in completely folded position; and

Figures 8(a) and 8(b) show perspective views of

examples of locking mechanisms suitable for maintaining the apparatus of figure 7 in the folded positions.

With reference to figure 1, a front perspective view  
5 of a portable bar unit 5 according to the present invention is shown in an unfolded and assembled condition. The embodiment shown is by way of example, and although described in relation to drinks bars, is equally adaptable for use as a vending counter or other application requiring  
10 use of a work-surface combined with storage space.

The bar unit 5 includes a work-surface 10 detachably mounted onto a base structure which includes a first side panel 12 (see figure 2), a second side panel 14 and a front  
15 panel 16. The front and side panels may be decorated with mouldings, carvings, surface features and embellishments or the like in any number of styles well known in the art. The work-surface 10 and side and front panels 12,14,16 may be constructed from any suitable material such as wood,  
20 laminated board, plastics etc., and may be faced with suitable materials. Although the figure shows a single unit in isolation, it is possible to adapt the design to allow for a plurality of units to be located adjacent one another with interlocking means well known in the art.

25

Referring now to figure 2, there is shown a perspective view the bar unit 5 of figure 1 viewed from the rear. In addition to side panels 12 and 14, there are

provided a partition panel 20 and shelves 22,24. In a presently preferred embodiment, two shelves are provided, but a different number may be readily accommodated. The side panel 12 is attached to front panel 16 in the proximity of an abutment 30 at the corner of the unit using a hinge arrangement or similar to allow the side panel 12 to fold to a position substantially parallel to, but spaced apart from the front panel 16. A corresponding arrangement exists on the other side of the unit for side panel 14. The partition panel 20 is attached in similar fashion in the proximity of a vertical member 32. The shelves 22 and 24 are each detachably mounted onto pairs of support rails 34,36 attached to the inner surface of side panel 14 and partition panel 20 respectively. The configuration of this particular embodiment conveniently allows shelving space together with a larger, partially enclosed volume in which, for example, barrels and pump equipment might be placed.

Referring now to figure 3, there is shown bar unit 5 with work-surface 10 raised to show detail of the underside thereof. An edging strip 38 of thickness greater than the body of the work-surface circumscribes the work-surface providing a shoulder around the underside of the work-surface which engages the upper edge 40 of the front panel 16, and the upper edges 42,44 of the side panels 12,14. Additional recesses 48,50 in the underside of work-surface 10 are provided to engage the side panel upper edges 42,44 thus preventing movement of the side panels 12,14 once the

work-surface 10 is placed thereon. A similar arrangement of two bars 52,54 is provided on the underside of the work-surface to engage the upper edge 46 of partition panel 20 in like manner. It will be clear that a number of well-known techniques to engage the work-surface 10 and side, front and partition panels 12,14,16,20 may be employed in accordance with the present invention, details of which are readily available to one skilled in the art, and are not discussed further.

10

The front panel 16, abutment 30, vertical member 32, together with an upper abutment 56 and lower abutment 58 define a stowage cavity 60 when side panel 12 is placed in its folded position. The unit is constructed in order that the stowage cavity 60 is dimensionally appropriate to facilitate stowage of the work-surface 10 therein.

Referring now to figure 4, this arrangement is shown in detail. The work-surface 10 is located in stowage cavity 60, although the side panel 12 is still shown in unfolded position. It will be clear that abutments 30,56 and 58, together with vertical member 32 are necessary to accommodate the thickness of the work-surface 10. The height of the side and front panels 12,14,16 is necessary to accommodate the long axis of the work-surface 10.

Also shown in figure 4 is the upper shelf 24 lifted for positioning on support rails 34,36. The front panel

16, an abutment 30' (corresponding to abutment 30 on the opposing side of the unit 5), an upper abutment portion 56', a lower abutment portion 58', vertical member 32 and partition panel 20 define a stowage cavity 61 when  
5 partition panel 20 is placed in its folded position.

With reference now to figure 5, there is shown shelves 22,24 in position in stowage cavity 61, supported in place by grooved retaining bars 62,64 respectively. Alternative  
10 forms of restraining the shelves can readily be employed and are not discussed further. The side panels 12,14 and partition panel 20 are still shown in unfolded position, but the folding pattern is indicated by the arrows. In a preferred embodiment shown, the partition panel 20 hinges  
15 to a folded position prior to the second side panel 14 hinging to a folded position. The upper abutment portion 56' and lower abutment portion 58' are of reduced thickness to allow for the additional thickness of partition panel 20, compared with the corresponding portions 56 and 58.  
20 The shelves 22,24 are of thickness less than the work-surface 10, thereby allowing the accommodation of partition panel 20 in folded position. It will be clear that the shelf dimensions are constrained such that their combined length does not exceed the height of the unit 5, and that  
25 the width of a shelf in combination with the width of the work-surface do not exceed the length of the unit 5.

Referring now to figure 6 there is shown unit 5 in



plan view with side panels 12,14 and partition panel 20 in folded position, and unfolded positions thereof indicated by dashed lines.

5        Referring now to figure 7 there is shown the unit 5 in perspective view with side panels 12,14 in folded position, and partition panel 20 in folded and concealed position. According a preferred embodiment, the folded unit 5 has no projections beyond the basic cuboid shape, for maximum  
10 convenience of storage and transportation. To this end, in the embodiment shown in figure 7, and with reference to the detailed diagrams of figure 8, locking means 70-73 are provided in recessed locations to ensure that side panels 12,14 remain in folded position, thus restraining partition  
15 panel 20 in folded position, and restraining work-surface 10 and shelves 22,24 in stowed position.

      According to figure 8(a), locking means 70,71 comprise a bolt 76 mounted on an upper abutment portion 56" and a  
20 socket 77 mounted on side panel 12 or side panel 14. Abutment portion 56" accommodates the thickness of the side panels 12,14 at a portion of reduced thickness 12a,14a of side panels 12,14 respectively.

25        According to figure 8(b), locking means 72,73 comprise bolt 78 mounted on lower abutment portion 58" and socket 79 provided within the side panel 12 or 14. It will be clear that a large number of different locking mechanisms may be

envisaged which are entirely appropriate to the present invention.

The present invention is not restricted to the particular embodiments thus described. A unit may include more than one partition panel, a different number of shelves, or other similar modification, while remaining within the dimensional constraints which allow the convenient folding arrangement. The shelves may be provided with additional features such as lipped edges. The outer surfaces of all panels may be carved, moulded or otherwise embellished according to any specific requirements, and modifications may be made to the unit to facilitate adjoining of adjacent units.

CLAIMS

1 A folding work-surface and shelving apparatus or kit  
5 therefor comprising:

a front panel, a first and second side panel, a work-surface, a partition panel and at least one shelf;

said front panel having said first and said second side panels and said partition panel foldably attached  
10 thereto; said first side panel and a portion of said front panel being adapted to at least partially form a first cavity therebetween when said first side panel is in a folded position; said second side panel, said partition panel and a portion of said front panel being adapted to at  
15 least partially form a second cavity therebetween when said second side panel and said partition panel are in a folded position; said first cavity being of suitable dimension for stowage of said work-surface and said second cavity being of suitable dimension for stowage of said at least one  
20 shelf; said first and second side panels and said front panel being adapted to support said work-surface in a substantially horizontal position when said first and second side panels are in an unfolded position.

25 2 The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said partition panel and said second side panel are adapted to support said at least one shelf therebetween in a substantially horizontal position when said partition panel and said second side

panel are in an unfolded position.

3     The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said work-surface has  
a length which is less than the height of said front panel  
5     and a width which when combined with the width of said at  
least one shelf amounts to less than the width of said  
front panel.

4     The apparatus of claim 1 including a first and second  
10    locking means adapted to lock said first and second side  
panels respectively in said unfolded positions.

5     The apparatus of claim 1 including locking means  
adapted to lock said first and second side panels in said  
15    folded positions.

6     The apparatus of claim 5 wherein said locking means is  
recessed such that no portion thereof protrudes from an  
outer surface defined by the first and second side panels  
20    in their respective folded positions.

7     A folding work-surface and shelving apparatus or kit  
therefor substantially as described herein.

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**Patents Act 1977**  
**Examiner's report to the Comptroller under**  
**Section 17 (The Search Report)**

Application number

GB 9209252.7

**Relevant Technical fields**

(i) UK Cl (Edition L ) A4B

(ii) Int Cl (Edition 5 ) A47B 43/00

**Search Examiner**

M J PENNELL

**Databases (see over)**

(i) UK Patent Office

(ii)

**Date of Search**

17 AUGUST 1993

Documents considered relevant following a search in respect of claims 1-7

Category (see over)	Identity of document and relevant passages	Relevant to claim(s)
	NONE FOUND	

Category	Identity of document and relevant passages	Relevant to claim(s)

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